



The President's Daily Brief

May 21, 1976

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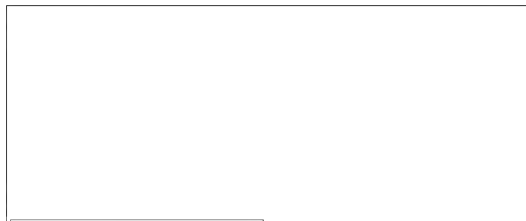
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LEBANON: *Fighting fell off sharply yesterday despite Kamal Jumblatt's denials that the leftists have agreed to a cease-fire.*

Jumblatt indicated that he and his leftist allies are still studying a proposal made on Wednesday by president-elect Sarkis to reopen negotiations for a political settlement.

A senior Syrian military officer recently told the US defense attache that Syria's immediate objective is a cease-fire, not negotiations or Franjiah's resignation. He implied that Syria is prepared to enforce the cease-fire. 25X1



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The Christians have allowed Syrians and Palestinians to patrol disputed areas during previous cease-fires but always have denied them access to Christian areas. 25X1



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SYRIA: *Leaders of Syria's ruling Baath Party have been meeting this week in Damascus, apparently to review Syrian strategy in Lebanon. President Asad presumably will elicit a statement of support from the group in an effort to counter increasing domestic criticism of his actions in Lebanon.*

Asad needs an expression of party support at this time. Demonstrations against Syria's role in Lebanon have occurred recently in several areas of Syria and among all principal ethnic groups. Arab students in Europe have staged protests at some Syrian embassies.

Many Syrians not actively involved in the protests presumably are unhappy with the economic problems

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associated with the Lebanon campaign--some basic commodities are now scarce or available only at inflated prices--and share the feeling that Asad is protecting the Lebanese Christians. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] disaffection is especially widespread among Syria's Druze population as a result of Asad's attacks on Lebanese leftist and Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt. 25X1

Security forces in Syria have responded to the growing unrest by arresting large numbers of civilians and some government officials and military officers. Several hundred persons may have been detained over the past few weeks, although many apparently have subsequently been cleared and released.

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USSR: [redacted]

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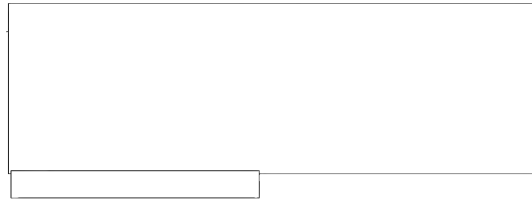
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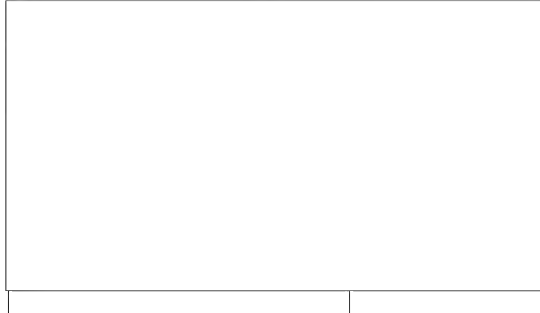
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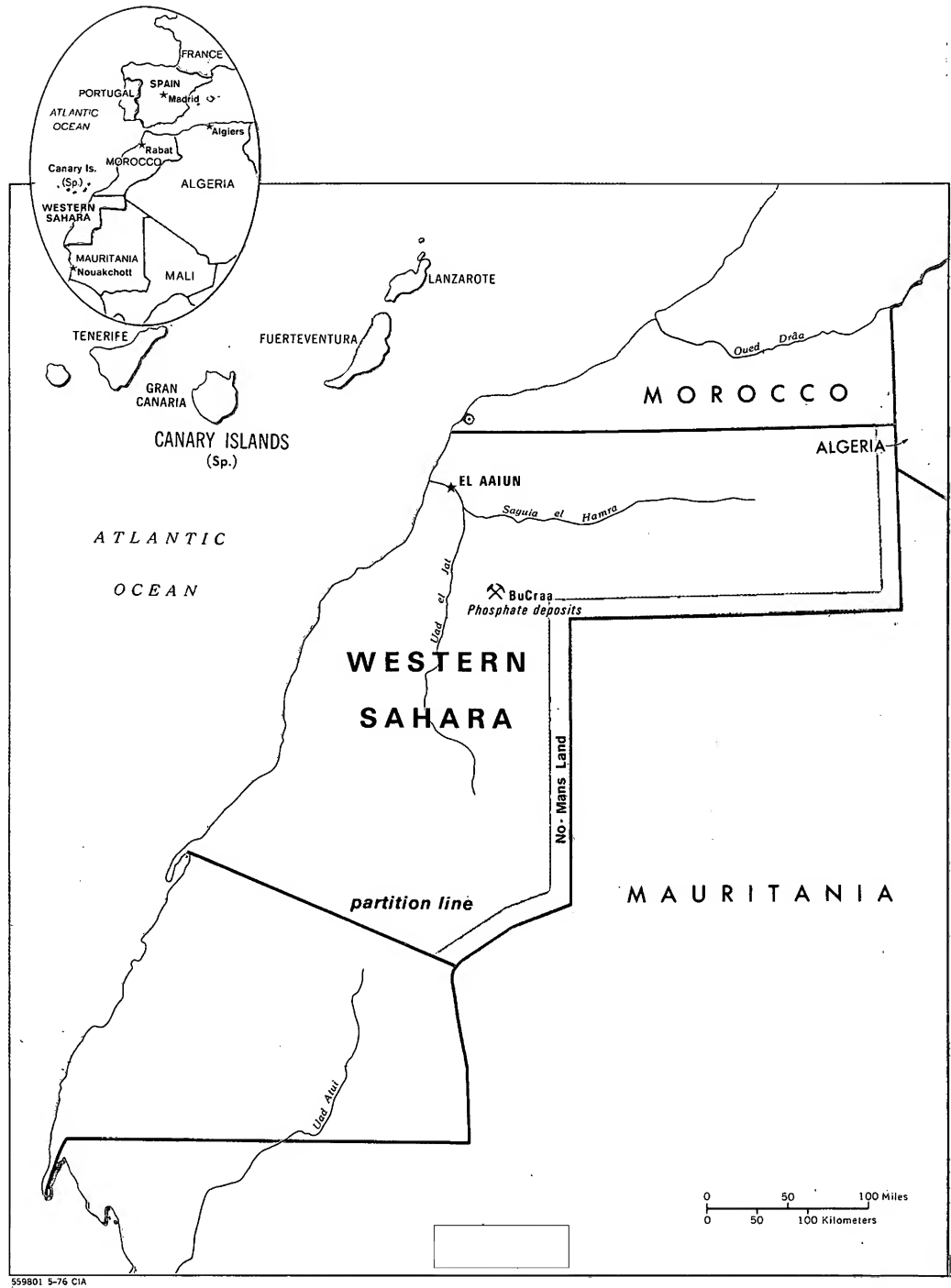
USSR: *Fourteen under-ground grain storage bunkers have now been identified*

Most of the bunkers are located near large cities in the European part of the Soviet Union. Their storage capacities range from approximately 30,000 to 100,000 metric tons, with the combined capacity estimated to be about a million metric tons. This figure is a very small amount in relation to civilian requirements and the equivalent of approximately 1 percent of total off-farm storage capacity.

All of the sites are 15 kilometers (9 miles) from the nearest large city. They also are generally upwind of the city, which indicates nuclear fall-out patterns may have been a consideration in their construction.

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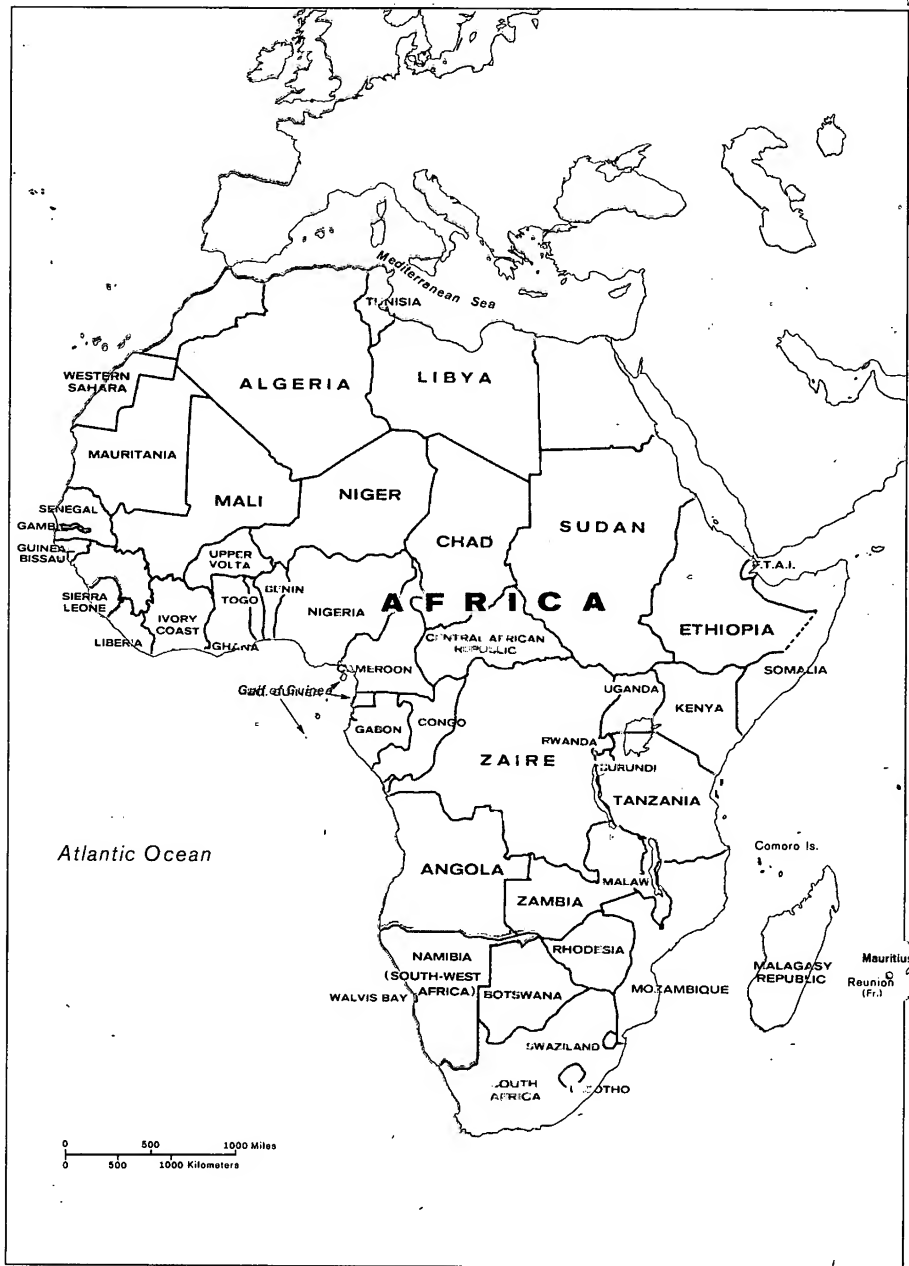
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ALGERIA-MOROCCO: *Algeria is renewing its efforts to keep the UN involved in the dispute with Morocco and Mauritania over Western Sahara.*

Algerian Foreign Minister Bouteflika, in a letter this week to Secretary General Waldheim, belatedly condemned the agreement Rabat and Nouakchott signed on April 14 to partition the disputed territory. Bouteflika reiterated Algiers' persistent demand for a UN-supervised referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

The Algerian initiative is unlikely to have much of an impact on the UN. Only eight other African states and North Korea have extended diplomatic recognition to the new Polisario "state" created last February.

Moroccan forces, meanwhile, continue to be harassed by Polisario guerrillas despite the military operation last month designed to clean out the remaining pockets of resistance in Western Sahara. The Southern Zone commander reportedly has proposed the establishment of a no-man's land approximately 30 kilometers (18 miles) wide along the entire eastern frontier of Morocco's portion of the Sahara.



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NOTES

The special security zone created by South African authorities earlier this month in northern Namibia has been extended to cover the entire length of the Namibia-Angola border.

The 1-kilometer-wide zone, from which all villagers will be removed, is designed to facilitate counterinsurgency operations. South African spokesmen are justifying the extension of the zone by citing an increase in guerrilla operations by the South-West Africa Peoples' Organization, the Namibian nationalist organization.

* * *

President Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone will be seeking economic assistance from Washington, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund when he arrives in the US on Sunday for a private visit.

The country's economy, dependent mainly on diamond and agricultural exports, has been deteriorating for years, and the government has been searching in vain for aid from all sources.

Until 1975, Sierra Leone leaned toward the more radical members of the Organization of African Unity but has since become more moderate on many issues of concern to the US. During his trip here, Stevens is likely to promise to side more closely with the US on international issues in return for more economic aid.

The US is an important customer for Sierra Leone's diamonds and coffee, but US investment is quite small, limited mainly to participation in a titanium mining venture.

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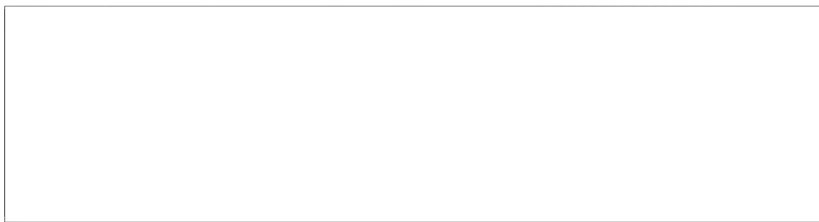
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